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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 26 September 1991, at 10 a.m.

President:	Mr. SHIHABI	(Saudi Arabia)
later:	Mr. CORDOVEZ	(Ecuador)

- Address by His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II von und zu Liechtenstein, Reigning Prince and Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein
- Statement by the President
- Address by His Royal Highness Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, President of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia
- Address by His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait

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- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Asamoah (Ghana)

Mr. Giray (Turkey)

Mr. de Marco (Malta)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

ADDRESS BY HIS SERENE HIGHNESS PRINCE HANS-ADAM II VON UND ZU LIECHTENSTEIN, REIGNING PRINCE AND HEAD OF STATE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The Assembly will first hear an address by the Reigning Prince and Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein.

His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II von und zu Liechtenstein, Reigning Prince and Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Reigning Prince and Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein, His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II von und zu Liechtenstein, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Prince HANS-ADAM II: First of all, Sir, please accept my warmest congratulations on your election to this high office. We are fully confident that you will carry out the responsibility of your office with great skill and efficiency. The delegation of Liechtenstein wishes you success and pledges to you its full support.

It is a great pleasure for me to pay a tribute today to the Secretary-General. I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to him for the friendship that he has shown to my country even when it was not yet a Member of the United Nations. It was a privilege for us to host his visit to our country a few months ago, and I would like to thank him again for having paid this honour to Liechtenstein. We have much admiration for the excellent leadership he has shown during his 10 years as Secretary-General of the Organization, and I wish to express our gratitude to him and to his staff. Because of the momentous changes in the world and thanks to his efforts, the

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United Nations is slowly assuming more and more of the peace-keeping responsibilities throughout the world in accordance with the original intentions of its founders. We all know, of course, that many further efforts and endeavours are necessary to bring peace and happiness to every region of the world.

Liechtenstein wishes to welcome the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which joined the Organization on 17 September. We are convinced that the admission of the two States duly corresponds to the principle of universality expressed in the Charter, as well as to the wish of the Korean people that the process of reunification be expedited.

Moreover, I wish to extend warm congratulations to the Federated States of Micronesia and to the Republic of the Marshall Islands, as well as to the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on their admission as sovereign and equal members of the United Nations.

As the representative of the smallest Member State of the United Nations, I want to thank you for accepting Liechtenstein last year as a Member of this international Organization. Membership of the United Nations is of great significance, especially for small countries like Liechtenstein. The United Nations is a special meeting-place for all countries, some of which do not have representations all over the world. Moreover, United Nations membership gives protection to those countries which are too weak to defend their independence.

Not every State is fortunate enough to have neighbours like Austria and Switzerland, which have respected the independence of the Principality of Liechtenstein over centuries. I should like to avail myself of this occasion to thank those two countries for all the help and support they have given us throughout our history.

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In the recent past we have been able to witness rapid and almost revolutionary political changes in the world. Tensions between East and West have been greatly reduced. Europe is no longer divided. Solutions to some regional conflicts are closer as ever before. These developments form the background for the new challenges that the world community is facing.

The role of the United Nations has changed. The Organization has entered a new phase. Profiting from the absence of great-Power confrontation, it is acting more efficiently and is concentrating on the cause of peace and security.

Small States have a special need for protection and security. The Principality of Liechtenstein, although it is, fortunately, a prosperous and secure country surrounded by two permanently neutral neighbours, feels that this issue is of direct relevance. Respect for international law is our only protection. For these reasons, we feel deeply committed to the principles of the sovereign equality, political independence and territorial integrity of States. While we were not a Member of the Organization in 1989, we fully support resolution 44/21, in which the General Assembly urged Member States inter alia to settle disputes peacefully, and adhere to the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Unfortunately, again and again in the history of mankind we have seen brutal aggressions of one country against another. The aggression of Iraq against its small neighbour Kuwait was just the most recent example in a long list. The peace-loving countries of the world have to be grateful to the United Nations and to the Member States that took part in the military action against Iraq that finally resulted in putting an end to the occupation and preventing the permanent annexation of Kuwait. International law served as

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the umbrella for the international response to the Gulf crisis, and thus constitutes the most recent proof that respect for its precepts is a small country's only protection. Let us all hope that this crisis was a turning-point in human history, for as long as the United Nations reacts as it did during the Gulf crisis, such aggressions will cease to become attractive instruments for even the most power-hungry dictators.

Unfortunately, we know that even if we succeed in preventing all acts of aggression, peace and happiness will not come easily to the world. Some of the most cruel wars in the past decades have been civil wars. Politicians and historians can give us many reasons why civil wars occur: different cultures, languages or religions that have difficulty coexisting in a single State, oppressed minorities or simply political differences that cannot be resolved peacefully.

A solution for some of these problems can be found internally if a State respects human rights and fundamental freedoms and has democratic institutions that work. But history shows that even then civil wars can break out. Human rights can also be violated in countries with a democratic tradition. Democratic institutions can break down. There are situations where peaceful coexistence between different groups inside a single State does not seem to be possible, whatever the reasons may be. Should we, in those cases, not endeavour to find other solutions in accordance with the principle of self-determination, rather than risk cruel and destructive civil wars?

I am aware that the United Nations, for good reasons, has been very prudent concerning the principle of self-determination. To encourage the exercise of the right to self-determination might lead to even more civil wars and to the disintegration of Member States. Non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States has certainly been a wise policy to follow.

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Nevertheless, we have to accept the fact that the borders of nearly all Member States, including my own country, have not been drawn according to the principle of self-determination. They are usually the product of colonial expansion, international treaties or war, and very seldom have people been asked where they want to belong. But even if they had been asked, a new generation might have another opinion; circumstances can change and expectations can remain unfulfilled.

A majority of Member States certainly supports self-determination in theory. How this principle is to be applied in practice has, however, in my opinion, not been studied enough. Usually the discussion starts over a specific case when strong emotions are already involved. Would it not be better at least to try to find a minimum consensus between Member States on some guiding principles, when efforts are being made to implement the principle of self-determination?

To be acceptable to the largest possible number of Member States, such guidelines or rules of conduct should foresee a careful evolution, which could start from a low level and go on to higher levels of autonomy before complete independence could be attained. Independence is, however, not always the best solution: it can be a complicated and sometimes traumatic process.

I wish to inform members of my intention to instruct experts to prepare a preliminary study on this question, the outcome of which would be submitted in due course to the General Assembly, if that was considered desirable. A convention modelled after the European Convention on Human Rights could eventually be the product of these efforts. I should like to raise a few points and draw a few lines in order to give the Assembly an overall idea of the possible outline of such an instrument.

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A central question will be to define what entity can be the beneficiary of the right to self-determination. Several methods have been discussed in the past. It might be sufficient to establish the minimum size of the area and population involved. Setting this minimum size very low would have two important advantages: First, minorities that asked for self-determination would consequently have to grant the same rights to their own minorities; experience shows us that they are at times unwilling to do so, which can be the cause of new problems. Secondly, a low minimum size would, in my opinion, lead to a decentralization rather than to a break-up of the present States, because for small groups and areas independence will not always be the best solution.

For a modern State decentralization has political and economic advantages. Decentralization is certainly one of the key elements for the prosperity and political stability of Switzerland, a country without natural resources and a population with four languages, various religions and many political parties.

A convention on self-determination could foresee several degrees of autonomy before independence were granted to a certain region, thus giving the central State and the region the time to adapt to the new situation, with the likely outcome that the people would in most instances prefer autonomy to independence. Three degrees of autonomy could be envisaged.

The first degree could involve the election of representatives for the new autonomous region and consequently the administration by those elected representatives of the funds which are allocated by the central government. Some additional rights could be given in the fields of culture and education.

The next step could involve some autonomy in taxation. Direct taxes would probably be raised better by the regions, whereas indirect taxation,

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import duties and the like could remain with the central government. A financial compensation plan would have to be worked out at this stage, taking into account the income and the administrative functions of the region, which may, for instance, already include the police and the lower courts.

The third degree of autonomy could involve some legislative power. Examples can already be studied in some of the decentralized States. At this stage of autonomy most administrative functions of the central State could be turned over to the region, with the exception of defence and foreign affairs. Even regional military units could be set up as long as they were integrated into the overall defence plan.

The next step of this process - if it were desired - would be full independence.

Those States which accepted the general terms of a possible convention on self-determination could envisage setting up an international commission or court comparable to the European Commission and Court for Human Rights, to which all parties concerned could appeal in case of conflicts. Such an approach would offer the possibility to observe how these general guidelines worked in reality and to adjust them if necessary. Other States might then be willing to sign the convention too, and perhaps one day those guidelines on self determination could become generally accepted international law, as other conventions have become.

If we look at human history it seems that humanity does not have many alternatives. In the past new States have been born, and new States will be born in the future; States have disappeared or their borders have changed, and that will also happen in the future. If we look at longer periods of time we see that States have life cycles similar to the human beings who created them. The life cycle of a State might last for many generations but hardly

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any Member State of the United Nations has existed in its present borders for longer than 10 generations. It could be dangerous if one tried to put a hold on these cycles, which have been present throughout human history. To freeze human evolution has in the past often been a futile undertaking and has probably brought more violence than would result if such a process were controlled peacefully.

Considering the advances in the field of technology, civil wars will become more and more destructive, not only for those directly involved but also for neighbouring States and for our whole environment. The possible destruction of a large nuclear power plant in a civil war is a frightening example. Would it not be much safer to replace the power of weapons by the power of voting, even if it meant that new States might be born?

As the representative of the smallest and one of the youngest Member countries, I wish to thank the Assembly for having given me the opportunity to express my views on a controversial subject and to present ideas related thereto.

Liechtenstein is proud to be a Member of the United Nations, an Organization that gives full priority to respect for international law and the principles of its Charter. We shall continue to support all United Nations efforts aimed at realizing international peace and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Reigning Prince and Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein for the statement he has just made.

His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II von und zu Liechtenstein, Reigning Prince and Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I would like to draw representatives' attention to the fact that, since the very beginning of this session, we have all been anxious to have our meetings start at their scheduled time. This morning, five minutes after the opening of the meeting, only 29 delegations were seated. I mentioned this and thanked them at the time. I hope that all our brothers and sisters will kindly observe the scheduled times of the meetings so that we might accomplish our work on time.

ADDRESS BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS SAMDECH NORODOM SIHANOUK, PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CAMBODIA

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia, His Royal Highness Samdech Norodom Sihanouk.

His Royal Highness Samdech Norodom Sihanouk was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia, His Royal Highness Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Norodom SIHANOUK (interpretation from French): Within the framework of the peace plan for a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian conflict - a plan adopted on 28 August 1990 by the five permanent members of the Security Council and unanimously approved by the Security Council in its resolution 668 (1990) and by acclamation by our General Assembly in its resolution 45/3 of 15 October 1990 - the Supreme National Council of Cambodia was created. The Council is the sole legitimate organ embodying the sovereignty and unity of Cambodia, and the sole source of

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authority during the transitional period until free and fair elections can be held, organized and supervised under United Nations control.

It is in my capacity as President of this Supreme National Council and on behalf of the new united, independent and sovereign Cambodia and its people that I have today the honour and the privilege of addressing this Assembly.

My delegation welcomes with deep satisfaction, Sir, your election to the presidency of the forty-sixth session of our General Assembly. It is a special tribute to your people and your country, Saudi Arabia. I am delighted to convey to you my warmest congratulations. We believe that your experience and well-known competence will ensure the success of our proceedings.

I also pay a sincere tribute to His Excellency Guido De Marco, eminent son of Malta, who by his remarkable personal diplomatic qualities and wisdom so successfully led the proceedings of the forty-fifth session of our General Assembly.

This year we welcome to our Organization seven new Member States: the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The Supeme National Council of Cambodia welcomes them to our Organization, conveys its warmest greetings to their respective Governments and peoples, and assures them of its desire to establish with them friendly and fruitful relations. Their presence within our Organization is a testimony to the great vitality and growing prestige of the United Nations.

I take this auspicious opportunity to pay the warmest possible tribute to His Excellency the Secretary-General for his noble and tireless activities in the service of many countries and peoples that have faced great difficulties. Under his leadership the United Nations has been reborn and its prestige increased through the active and fruitful cooperation between the Member

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States and the Secretariat. We salute with admiration the successes of the United Nations under His Excellency's wise and courageous leadership.

At the moment when the Cambodian people can finally see the end of the tunnel of its miseries and sufferings, we Cambodians shall not forget what has been done, with tenacity, good will, faith, generosity and talent by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Mr. Rafeeuddin Ahmed, to give the Cambodian people and country every possible chance of restoring peace and freedom within the framework of an indispensable national reconciliation.

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We are aware that, having worked so hard and made so many sacrifices in the service of the United Nations and the peoples of the world, he has decided not to request a new mandate but to take a well-deserved retirement. Nevertheless, our Cambodia has the conviction that the United Nations and the peoples of this Earth still have a very great need of his services and of his invaluable assistance in overcoming the difficulties that exist in certain parts of the world. Thus we take the liberty of expressing the warm wish that he will agree to continue at the helm of the United Nations for some years to come. We are persuaded that a great many countries would renew their trust in him in defending the great ideals of peace and development to which all peoples are profoundly attached. It is understood, of course, that Cambodia fully respects his own free choice.

After 12 years of war, destruction and suffering, my country, Cambodia, and its people are once again united. This monumental achievement has been made possible thanks to the help and continuous support for a period of several years of all justice-loving and freedom-loving countries, true friends of Cambodia and its people, and also thanks to the will of all Cambodian patriots who have united to put an end to the bloody and destructive Cambodian tragedy that lasted from 1970 to 1990. A new era of peace is opening up before us, and, while it is true that the road leading us to a future of national reconciliation, national unity and general development in peace is still a long and painful one strewn with obstacles, it is also full of hope and the desire to see our homeland resume the place it deserves in the family of nations and achieve progress and development.

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The progress achieved in Jakarta and Pattaya in June 1991, in Beijing in July 1991, in Pattaya again in August 1991 and, most recently, in New York - where the major issues relating to a cease-fire, the cessation of external military aid, the demobilization of armed forces, political and electoral systems for Cambodia and the declaration of fundamental human rights were settled - augurs well for the future. The Paris International Conference on Cambodia, which will resume its work on about 21 October 1991, will permit us to finalize and sign the long-awaited agreement on the comprehensive settlement of the Cambodia conflict.

The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) will soon be in a position to help the Supreme National Council to make Cambodia an independent State with full territorial integrity and a liberal democracy, neutral, non-aligned and friendly to all those countries that respect our independence, our territorial integrity and our neutrality. The Supreme National Council and UNTAC constitute the two key inseparable elements of the United Nations Peace Plan for Cambodia.

During the past three months the Supreme National Council of Cambodia has adopted by consensus a number of very important decisions on the military and civil arrangements contained in the draft agreements for a comprehensive political settlement. This has been achieved thanks to the spirit of compromise and of national reconciliation that has been nurtured by all the members of the Supreme National Council. I pay a tribute to the patriotism and commitment to the ideals of peace and national unity shown by the 11 other members of the Supreme National Council and their trust in their elected President. This has allowed us to overcome great difficulties and resolve major problems at the meetings held in Pattaya, Beijing, Pattaya again and New York.

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On behalf of Cambodia and its Supreme National Council and its people, I wish to express our deep and sincere gratitude to all the countries, peoples and personalities concerned, particularly those of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, Australia and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, the two co-Chairmen of the Paris International Conference on Cambodia, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his distinguished colleagues. Without their combined, tireless and noble efforts, we should not have been able to reach the present stage of the peace process.

I wish to pay a particular and respectful tribute to Their Majesties the King and Queen of Thailand, to the Royal Thai Government and to the Thai people. I wish to express once again to them our everlasting and profound gratitude for their constant compassion and generous hospitality, protection and varied assistance to more than 350,000 Khmer refugees on Thai soil.

I should like also to express my gratitude to all those countries which have been kind enough to grant asylum to thousands of Cambodian refugees, as well as to all the relief and humanitarian assistance bodies of the United Nations and the governmental and non-governmental agencies of many countries which have for approximately 13 years now been giving help and assistance to our unfortunate compatriots living in camps along the Thai-Cambodian border.

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As the people of Cambodia prepare for a more stable and harmonious future, they are having to cope with severe floods caused by storms and torrential rains. The immense damage caused by the floods will involve us in an extra effort to rebuild our country. In response to the appeal that I made on 23 August for emergency-relief assistance for our unfortunate compatriots who were the victims of this disaster, a number of countries took immediate steps to come to our help. I wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the United Nations and our Secretary-General and to Australia, Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, Thailand, New Zealand and Viet Nam, as well as in the international organizations that replied so promptly to my appeal. With their generous help, we have been able, to a certain extent, to restore normality in the regions affected. To those countries that are able to provide further assistance to our people I appeal that they do so as soon as possible.

I wish to take this opportunity to draw attention to a matter that concerns me deeply. For many years I have been deeply disturbed by the almost total saturation of Cambodian soil with land mines. These mines have already crippled a great number of our people - men and women - and they pose a constant danger to life. Today I appeal for a world-wide ban on the use of mines - beginning in Cambodia.

Over the past year we have seen major changes in our world - changes that augur well for the future of international relations. Détente between East and West continues to develop. Several nations have achieved independence and freedom without bloodshed. For its part, Cambodia will adopt a policy of neutrality and non-alignment and of solidarity with all the peoples struggling against injustice and discrimination and for freedom, and with all those countries that are fighting to obtain respect for human rights,

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self-determination and everything else included in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the five principles of peaceful co-existence and those of non-alignment.

My delegation warmly supports the wise and highly patriotic proposals for the reunification of Korea put forward by Marshal Kim Il Sung, President of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We are happy to note that contacts between the two parts of Korea have increased with a view to achieving national reconciliation, which will lead, at a later stage, to reunification. We encourage their efforts and hope that, now that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea have become full Members of this Organization, the process of reunification will be accelerated. Korea is one country, not two.

My delegation supports the efforts of the Palestinian people to recover their fundamental national rights. We hope that the international peace conference will take place soon and that, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), it will succeed in securing the right of all the countries and peoples in the Middle East, including Palestine and Israel, to live in peace and stability within borders recognized by the international community.

My delegation is encouraged by the progress that has been made in settling the conflicts affecting Afghanistan, Lebanon, Cyprus and Western Sahara. We also welcome the progress that has been achieved in South Africa towards the dismantling of apartheid and the negotiations that are taking place for the purpose of establishing there a democratic and non-racial regime.

While working to establish peace and national reconciliation and to achieve a comprehenive political settlement of its problem in accordance with

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the United Nations peace plan, Cambodia will contribute actively to the building of a better world where peace and prosperty, with justice and democratic freedoms, will prevail.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia for the statement he has just made and for his kind words addressed to my country and to me personally.

His Royal Highness Prince Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, President of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY HIS HIGHNESS SHEIKH JABER AL-AHMAD AL-JABER AL-SABAH, AMIR OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Amir of the State of Kuwait.

Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): At about this time last year, the General Assembly heard an address by His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, as a fighter and a defender of his country, which was the victim of invasion and was under occupation. In his address, he stressed and indeed embodied the right of Kuwait to defend its independence and to restore legitimacy. He called upon the United Nations to shoulder its responsibilities towards a Member State whose rights had been violated.

We are pleased that in the past year, the United Nations has carried out its duties in full. Today, after the restoration of the freedom, sovereignty and legitimate Government of Kuwait, we are happy to welcome His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, who will proudly address the Assembly.

On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Amir of the State of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Sheikh AL-SABAH (interpretation from Arabic):

"In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Universe".

Those are, my dear brothers and friends, the opening words of the Koran, the Holy Book of Muslims. Allah is the Lord of the universe, the Lord of the heavens, the earth and whatever there is in between; Allah is the Lord of all living creatures and of all human beings, irrespective of race or colour. God gave life to mankind in compassion, watches over human growth with the same compassion and enjoins us in all of revealed Scripture and in all the messages of His prophets to demonstrate that compassion. No human being is superior to another except on grounds of piety and noble humanitarian deeds. No human race is better than any other, and no skin colour is preferable to another.

That, my dear brothers and friends, is our fundamental premise. Therefore, we praise Allah, our Lord, Who, after millenniums had gone by, finally brought the human race to culminate its long struggle and learn from bitter experience with the vision and insight needed to place at its service a forum like the present one, where all States gather on an equal footing in a common endeavour to uphold righteousness and justice, to establish and maintain universal order and security, and to achieve welfare and peace for all.

Until recently, and even now, my country was, and continues to be, a living example of the international community's determination to attain those goals, even at the price of the use of force. It appears that certain people simply will not correct their conduct or rethink their positions except in the face of force. But, as my country's case has not yet been closed, I shall return to speak about it later in my statement.

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Allow me now, Mr. President, to take this opportunity to extend to you, on behalf of the State of Kuwait, our warm congratulations and my own personal best wishes on your election as President of the forty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. We are confident that your vast experience, together with your deep sense of commitment and determination, will bring us closer to attainment of the lofty humanitarian objectives of this world Organization as it stands on the threshold of a new era. What augments our pleasure is the fact that you represent a sister State, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which was uniquely honoured by God, The Almighty, to be the land where the divine message was revealed and to serve as the beacon of Islam and the home of the two Holy Mosques. Throughout its history, your country has steadfastly supported righteousness and justice and made enormous sacrifices in that regard. As a member of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) Kuwait perceives your election as recoqnition of the outstanding role of the GCC in international life.

I wish also to express in the name of the people and Government of Kuwait our deep gratitude to Mr. Guido de Marco, the President of the last session of the General Assembly, for the achievements made under his wise leadership.

In addition, I would like to place on record the profound thanks and appreciation of the people of Kuwait, as well as my own personal gratitude, to His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his wise, painstaking and untiring efforts, combined with impressive impartiality, in doing the work of the United Nations.

Furthermore, let me take this opportunity to extend our congratulations to the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands on

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their admission to the United Nations. This is yet further testimony to the growing constructive role played by this Organization in the resolution of regional conflicts. It is our hope that these new Members will enhance the goals and purposes of the United Nations and promote world peace.

Let me now go back to the time last year when from this rostrum I addressed the plight of my small, peaceful country, which had been invaded by the Iraqi regime in a bid to wipe it off the map of the world. What a difference there is between now and then! One year ago, as I was speaking here, the forces of aggression were wreaking havoc in my country. Today I am conveying to you, my dear brothers and friends, our gratitude and the aspirations of a State Member of this world body, whose land, freedom and dignity have been restored as a result of the honourable stand you took, a position predicated upon principles that are the underpinning of justice and the rule of international law.

That stand will go down in the annals of history as an outstanding achievement on the part of this Organization. The resolutions of the Security Council were enforced through the collective efforts exerted by many countries that have reaffirmed the overriding concern of the United Nations, namely, maintaining world peace and saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. This objective is clearly spelt out in the Charter. The admirable performance by the United Nations will perhaps serve as a sharp reminder to any party indulging delusions about brutalizing others in pursuit of false ambitions or brazen fantasies that the world Organization stands ready as a strong and effective deterrent.

From the land of Kuwait I convey on behalf of its people sentiments of gratitude and appreciation to all those countries that rushed to our aid and to all those peoples that shared our pain as well as to all those leaders who

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responded swiftly in defence of right and justice against an overwhelming onslaught of ruthless brutality and barbarism.

In the name of every Kuwaiti national, let me commend the thousands of men and women who risked their lives in the air, on land and at sea to defend a small peace-loving nation. In the final analysis, all those servicemen and servicewomen came to our land to defend the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. They were engaged in battle to ensure the security of all nations in the future and to preserve world peace.

The United Nations system - in particular, the Security Council, the specialized agencies and the Secretary-General - and all the individual countries that contributed to the collective defence of Kuwait and to upholding the principles of the United Nations, together with every soldier who risked his or her life in the process of supporting us, have all won a prominent place in the history of our country as well as in our national conscience.

Kuwait by itself was unable to repel an enemy of overwhelming strength and unspeakable savagery. Kuwait fought hard, with all it had to give, and the Kuwaiti people demonstrated impressive steadfastness in challenging the invaders in a fashion that won the admiration of the world. Hundreds of Kuwaitis fell martyrs or suffered wounds. The most bitter legacy of the invasion, however, is the destruction of the social fabric of Kuwait by brutal and barbaric acts. Families have been split up and people have been terrorized and oppressed by unwarranted acts of malicious vengeance inflicted even on the elderly, women and children, who are still suffering from deep psychological scars. The rehabilitation process requires painstaking efforts over an extended period of time.

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In the same context, and in defiance of humanity as a whole, several thousands were taken prisoner or hostage to be subjected later to various forms of torture at the hands of the invaders. Thousands of these prisoners and hostages are still being held by the Iraqi regime in blatant violation of Security Council resolutions and the Islamic system of values, as well as in total disregard of international treaty commitments. May I from this podium address on behalf of Kuwait and its deeply afflicted people an appeal to the conscience of the world to ensure the freedom of those prisoners and hostages and to put an end to their suffering. Man, after all, is the most dignified of creatures, and it is totally inadmissible to use human beings as bargaining chips, as a means of bringing pressure to bear or as tools for blackmail.

My dear brothers and friends, you see before you a number of Kuwaiti children who represent many more who are appealing for your assistance in securing the release of their fathers, mothers, brothers or sisters who are still held by the Iraqi regime that is using them as a means of exploitation and blackmail. This is yet another uncalled-for human tragedy.

A year ago, when I sought to describe the inhuman practices the Iraqi regime was visiting upon Kuwait and its people, institutions and landmarks, as well as upon the third-country nationals who were living peacefully in our country, I was extremely careful in choosing the words and phrases to evoke, on the basis of reports received from inside the country, the conditions prevailing in occupied Kuwait. I did so in a conscious effort to avoid any exaggeration and overstatement. With liberation achieved, now that we have seen the true situation first-hand, it is safe to say that the real dimensions of the tragedy exceed by far even the most lurid imagination of a writer of

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fiction. Words like "murder," "torture," "humiliation," "plunder" and "devastation" cannot really do justice to the actual situation on the ground.

What is astounding, however, is that crimes of this nature and on such a scale have been perpetrated at a time when the twentieth century is drawing to a close and when mankind is striving hard to gain better control over the universe by using science to optimize the exploitation of natural resources and to combat social evils in a collective human effort to promote a better life for all. By contrast, the Iraqi leadership, while committing these brutalities in flagrant violation of international legitimacy, tries to hide under the mantle of Islam, thus compounding its already monstrous crime by distorting a sacred God-sent message that sacrifices life in all its forms, human, animal and plant. The Koran and the sayings of our Prophet Mohammed - peace be upon him - are replete with phrases that underline that celebration of life.

Having made these points, I prefer not to dwell on the atrocities and heinous crimes committed by the Iraq regime. The far-reaching evil effects of those crimes will perhaps continue to affect Kuwait and the surrounding areas for decades to come. The tremendous devastation has been and will continue to be recorded by the missions dispatched by the United Nations, the regional organizations and the scientific community. However, despite the extensive damage inflicted by the Iraqi invasion on Kuwait's physical infrastructure and the heinous crimes perpetrated against man and life in all its forms - as demonstrated by setting fire to 732 oil wells - the reconstruction of Kuwait is now well under way. The revitalization process is a mammoth operation that represents a real challenge to the will of man and to our sense of determination to pursue life. We are confident that with God's help and with your support we will be able to restore our full infrastructure.

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Free Kuwait has opened its doors anew to embrace the returning Kuwaitis and to host, in keeping with its longstanding tradition, the foreign workers, technicians, doctors, teachers and businessmen thanks to whose assistance a modern society was developed in an atmosphere of harmony where all received education and medical care. In the meantime, given their experience, the people of Kuwait are determined not to compromise any of their cherished values or gains. Democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and the enjoyment of national wealth by all are fundamental principles to which we will adhere even more scrupulously in the future.

Despite the great demands upon us in terms of the reconstruction of our homeland, Kuwait will continue to provide development assistance to other countries to the extent our means will alow. We will also continue to cooperate with the Secretary-General in support of United Nations programmes seeking to improve the human situation. Kuwait will also maintain a strong presence in areas of activity aimed at narrowing the enormous economic gap separating North from South.

The case of Kuwait has shown in clear-cut terms the parameters of an emerging new world order, one that must be predicated upon the principles of justice and respect for the sovereignty of all States. Within the framework of that emerging order an urgent solution must be found to the question of Palestine on the basis of the implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions. Such a settlement should lead to an honourable end, once and for all, to the tragedy of the Palestinian people. It is our hope now that the ongoing peace efforts to convene a conference for peace in the Middle East will bear fruit so that the envisioned goals will be attained. A similar approach should be followed in dealing with Lebanon, a country with which we

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stand united by fraternal ties and which rightly deserves our full support in achieving stability. Towards that end sincere efforts should continue to be made to enforce the relevant Security Council resolutions.

In our judgement, the resolution of both the Palestinian and the Lebanese problems will bring about peace and security throughout the Middle East.

Kuwait pursues a policy of harmony and peace inspired by international law and the new world order. Such an order can be consolidated by the power of law and international legitimacy and the use of the powers provided for in the Charter of the United Nation with a view to impose peace.

Liberated Kuwait will stay the course it has unfailingly pursued in the past, namely, to build bridges of friendship and harmony and to be an advocate of peace. The only difference between yesterday and today is that now we have a sharper and deeper sense of the meaning of peace, along with a greater faith in the emerging world order that will uphold justice, preserve rights and foster welfare and peace.

Peace is the essence and thrust of all divinely revealed faiths. That is the message of our religion. The letters that form the two Arabic words As-salam - "Peace" - and Al-Islam are the same. In this vein, may I recite from the Holy Koran a verse that echoes this universal call:

"O ye who believe!

"Enter into Islam;

"Whole-heartedly;

"And follow not

"The footsteps

"Of the Evil One;

"For he is to you

"An avowed enemy." (The Holy Koran, II, 208)

(Sheikh Al-Sabah)

Dear brothers and friends, I began this statement by expressing words of thanks to all of you, and I close by reiterating the same sentiments of acknowledgement and gratitude to you all. May God bring peace to all of you.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Amir of the State of Kuwait for the statement he has just made and express my deep thanks for the kind words His Highness addressed to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and to me personally.

Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. ASAMOAH (Ghana): Mr. President, permit me to congratulate you, in the name of the Ghana delegation, on your election to the highest office of the General Assembly and, for that matter, of our Organization. Your qualifications, experience and proven diplomatic skill assure us of a very rewarding and successful tenure. It gives us added pleasure, in view of the close and cordial relations between our two countries, to see you presiding over this session. We wish to assure you of our cooperation at all times.

I should also like to place on record our appreciation of the devoted commitment to duty which your predecessor demonstrated during his entire tenure. As Chairman of the Group of 77, we had the opportunity to work closely with Mr. Guido de Marco; and we wish to note the impressivenesss of his firm grasp of the intricate issues of multilateral diplomacy and his ability to create consensus out of seemingly irreconcilable positions.

When we last met here to reflect on the international situation, the high hopes of the world for peace and development after the relaxation of cold-war tensions risked being dashed in the face of the threat of war in the Gulf. In spite of world-wide appeals for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, sadly, war broke out.

The damage that the war has caused to man and his environment is yet to be fully assessed. The immediate consequences of the war - many dead, the untold suffering of the bereaved, the displaced and the dispossessed, the unparalleled environmental degradation that the burning fires of Kuwait inflict on the region - testify to the fragility of a world that builds its peace on might alone or solely on the concept of deterrence. That the war occurred at all reminds us of the distance that still lies before us on the

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road to full international peace and security. We are compelled to work diligently for the establishment of a truly just international order founded on the noble and valid principles enshrined in the Charter of our Organization, an order that will command and enjoy general legitimacy.

The time for such an order is very much now. The end of the global ideological division has unbound many promises. From grass roots to leaders in Eastern Europe, the yearning has been articulated for a greater and more rewarding interaction with the rest of the world.

Another significant step forward towards securing international peace and security was achieved when President Bush and President Gorbachev signed the strategic arms reduction treaty (START) on 31 July this year in Moscow to reduce their stocks of intercontinental ballistic missiles. We congratulate them and urge them to strive towards involving all nuclear States in order to rid our world of such deadly weapons and offer assurance against their proliferation or manufacture by others.

A reunited Germany has now taken its place in the world and is poised to become an important factor for peace and development. The peoples of Yemen have put behind them years of misunderstanding and now stand united in one country, the Republic of Yemen. Independent Namibia has consolidated its political freedom as a valuable member of our world body.

We have at this session witnessed the admission of seven new Members into our Organization as sovereign independent States. We take this opportunity to welcome them warmly and we share their pride and aspirations. We hope that their membership in our Organization will provide the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea with yet another forum for dialogue and shared understanding that will pave the way to the eventual unification of the two Koreas.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

The forces of change that the end of the cold war has unleashed upon the world continue to make their impact across the entire globe. The conflict in Angola appears to be coming to an end. In Cambodia, the momentum that the United Nations Peace Plan generated is gathering speed. Tentative steps towards peace in Afghanistan and El Salvador are evident.

We must also note with appreciation the initiative President Bush has taken to bring a more-lasting peace to Cyprus. The situation of "no peace, no war", though preferable to an outbreak of war, cannot prevail forever. We call on all concerned to cooperate in this laudable initiative.

Under the aegis of the United Nations, Western Sahara has hopefully entered the last stage of a final, definitive solution. We call upon both sides to give the United Nations-sponsored programme a chance to usher peace into the region.

In Liberia, the efforts of ECOMOG, the Military Observer Group of the Economic Comunity of West African States (ECOWAS), have helped to halt the senseless killing that threatened to tear the country apart. We call upon the international community to provide the necessary material and financial support for this international effort. Above all, we wish to appeal to the leaders of the various factions in Liberia to seek resolution of their differences without further recourse to arms.

The seemingly intractable Middle East crisis has begun to respond to some important initiatives. It is a matter of course that durable peace can only be achieved through the involvement of all parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, in the negotiating process.

The spirit of cooperation and dialogue that has prevailed over the atmosphere of confrontation and mutual recrimination has presented the United

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Nations with new opportunities. The enhanced role that the Organization has been called upon to play in the efforts of Member States to build a solid foundation for peace and development has been innovative and exciting. We wish to place on record our sincere appreciation for the work of our Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, and his team of dedicated assistants in the cause of world peace and development. Although the end of the cold war has benefited the cause of peace all over the world, much remains to be done to secure this peace.

With regard to the nations around which some of the big Powers have placed economic blockades, we wish to state that the end of the cold war calls for the expansion of détente, for dialogue and discourse, so that all nations can become part of a global family in which none shall be castigated for holding views that are contrary to the dominant concepts of government and economic management.

Today, South Africa stands knocking at the door to be allowed to re-enter the comity of nations. The repeal of the legislative pillars of apartheid, at least in theory, indicates that apartheid is in the process of being dismantled. The scrapping of the infamous Population Registration Act has established the possibility for basic equality in South Africa. The people of South Africa, however, are yet to enjoy an atmosphere conducive to free and meaningful negotiation. The recent disclosures about the clandestine military and financial support given by the National Party regime to the Inkatha Movement and the state-supported violence against members of the African National Congress have confirmed our often-stated doubts about the total and unquestionable commitment of the regime to the complete eradication of apartheid.

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It is thus a matter of regret and concern to the people and the Government of Ghana that certain Member States of the United Nations have unilaterally decided to suspend the measures agreed upon and affirmed by consensus by the Organization in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted on 14 December 1989 at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly. It has often been said that General Assembly resolutions have no binding effect and that they are largely recommendations to Member States. However, the credibility of the Organization requires that Member States endeavour to comply with conclusions reached in a democratic way.

We expect this session to reach conclusions that would not countenance any attempt designed to perpetuate apartheid in any other form. We need not equivocate on our abhorrence of racism and racial discrimination in any guise. We have to remind the racist regime continuously of our determination to ensure the eradication of apartheid. This is a moral responsibility from which we cannot escape. At the same time, we must not forget the senseless killings in Mozambique initiated by apartheid South Africa. Every effort has to be made to secure the cooperation of the Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) rebels in the search for peace.

The manifestations of ethnic rivalry, particularly in Europe, would test to the limit the spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding that should mark the post-cold-war era. We welcome the efforts being made to bring peace to the friendly State of Yugoslavia. Similarly, it is our view that satisfactory arrangements should be made to guarantee peace in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This peace, it is our hope, will be based on the need to preserve the brotherly ties that link the republics of that great country.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

It will only serve the cause of global disorder if the rest of the world is heard or seen to be supporting the forces of anarchy and disunity in that country.

While our efforts at disarmament and the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts must continue, these efforts in themselves cannot offer lasting solutions unless we tackle another fundamental threat to international peace and security - namely, global poverty.

The statistics on world poverty provided by a number of institutions, including those in the United Nations system, such as the the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA), continue to be disturbing. In its Global Economic Prospects and the Developing Countries 1991, the World Bank persuasively demonstrates the growing interdependence of the economies of industrialized and developing countries. For their 70 per cent share of world trade and output, the industrialized countries depend upon the developing countries for one quarter of their export sales, one fifth of their primary commodity inputs and nearly one half of their petroleum supplies. Sixty per cent of the trade and 47 per cent of the primary commodity inputs of the developing countries lie with the industrialized countries. Yet 70 per cent of world income is produced and consumed by 15 per cent of the world's population in the industrialized countries. The competition that has been forced upon 85 per cent of the world's population for the remaining 30 per cent of world income has consigned 41 least developed countries to an average annual per capita income of $300. This stands in striking contrast to the average annual per capita income of $14,500 in the industrialized countries.

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The impact of technological innovation in the industrialized countries will doubtless widen this gap. Assessments by international agencies point to the dangers of this ever-widening world disparity. In its overall perspective of the world economy up to the year 2000, DIESA foresees the prevalence of a state of disequilibrium, with internal and external imbalances in most regions. The World Bank suggest that the divergent patterns of growth observed in the 1980s will probably continue into the next decade. And the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has already described the 1980s as a "lost decade" to the Member States of its region.

The 85 per cent of the world's population that lives on 30 per cent of the world's income are not asking the world's 15 per cent for charity. We do recognize our primary and ultimate responsibility for our own development. There is clear evidence that in many instances some of us have achieved in decades what it took some of the industrialized countries centuries to achieve. Some have adopted socially and politically difficult economic restructuring and reform measures. The increasing factor of external influences that are beyond our control has, moreover, inhibited these efforts.

The international economic order, including the global financial and trade arrangements, that we were ushered into at independence still exploits our economies. Our restructuring and reform measures have in most cases resulted in increased production and productivity, but with diminishing returns. The unfavourable terms of trade, marked by falling commodity prices and increasing prices of industrial goods and services, coupled with high fiscal deficits in the industrialized countries and high international interest rates, have made debt-servicing a major burden on our fragile economies. In a situation where from 45 per cent to 80 per cent of export

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earnings are diverted into debt-servicing, the prospect of many of our economies regressing into a state of subsistence is not idle speculation.

The concern that the international community, through the General Assembly, has shown over the accelerating degradation of the global environment and the drug menace should encourage us to appreciate the unsustainability of the world's development models and life-styles. While in the industrialized countries it is prosperity that is at the root of environmental degradation, in the developing countries it is poverty that accounts for that state of affairs.

The depletion of the ozone layer that leads to global warming is the direct consequence of industrialization in the developed world. In the developing world, the necessity to eke out existence from the land and water has shown up as desertification and pollution. The Beijing Declaration of June this year aptly recognized that the inequities in current international economic relations not only have constrained the economic development of the developing countries, but have also undermined their capability to participate effectively in global environmental efforts. Resolution 44/228, which the General Assembly adopted last year, provided relevant guidelines for global discussions on the transfer of technology and financial resources, and should safely guide our discussions preparatory to and during the international Conference on Environment and Development.

It is again poverty in the developing countries that largely explains the resort to drug trafficking. Ghana has, without hesitation, joined in the international effort against the drug menace. We have passed laws that prescribe severe penalties, including confiscation of property, huge monetary fines and long prison terms. We have also adopted policy measures aimed at

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the rehabilitation of addicts and at discouraging the production and use of drugs. We are, however, not unmindful of the fact that the success of the global efforts depends on an overall balanced growth of the world economy.

A world that sincerely desires peace would have to rethink its attitude towards the present global economic imbalances. Poverty is a grim enemy of peace. Within the framework of gains from the demise of the cold war, we must strive to change the unfair international economic order. First of all, developing countries have to be relieved of the debt burden. Both the debt stock and the debt service must be reduced or eliminated completely. The recommendations of the Secretary-General's Expert Group on Africa's debt would have to be given serious consideration. Moreover, all measures that would stabilize commodity prices and promote the transfer of financial resources and technology to the mutual benefit of the industrialized and the developing countries will have to be taken.*

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* Mr. Cordovez (Ecuador), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

It is important to stress the inextricable links between political and economic developments at the international level, to underscore the need to make full use of the present favourable international situation and to lay the foundation for a lasting peace. It is tempting, for some, to see the ideological collapse of Eastern Europe as a victory for the inequitable global economic system that consigns the majority of the world to poverty. It has been remarked, more than once, that the industrial countries do not need the developing countries. There is nothing further from the truth. Developing countries may not command the arsenals of destruction that compel attention, but we are an essential part of a common interdependent world.

That interdependent world calls for increasing solidarity and cooperation. And nowhere is this more poignantly reflected than in the Accra Declaration of the Non-Aligned Movement, which examines a world in transition from diminishing confrontation to increasing cooperation. Recognizing that the unprecedented new vistas for peace demand new strategies of cooperation, the Non-Aligned Movement, which is today the Council of the Majority, pledges to do what such cooperation in fairness requires of members of the Movement as we demand what justice and equity entitle us to.

The Accra Declaration places new emphasis on the eradication of poverty, hunger, malnutrition and illiteracy. It urges the international community to match its will, determination and resources against these enemies of humanity. The Declaration calls, in that regard, for special attention to be paid to the monumental problems of Africa, which the world ignores at its peril.

The non-aligned perception of a new system of international relations is one which is rooted in the principles of the United Nations Charter, and in

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whose crafting the Non-Aligned Movement, the Council of the Majority, needs to play a more important and effective role, if that new system is to command legitimacy and acceptance.

The new world order does not call for the capitulation of the third world to any super-Power even in a unipolar world, and the Non-Aligned Movement has no room for those who covet the distinction of being wards of super-Powers. At Accra, the Non-Aligned Movement reaffirmed the continued relevance of the Movement as a free association of sovereign, independent States which recognize that there are third-world political and economic concerns that must be reflected on the international agenda. As part of that agenda, the Conference included the promotion of political pluralism and respect for human rights, whatever some detractors may say to the contrary. However, there is no basis for making the promotion of these values new conditionalities for international economic cooperation. And it must be admitted that the notion that development is not possible without them has no historical foundation.

In the non-aligned perception of a new world order, a revitalized North-South dialogue becomes urgent and compelling. The Group of 77, which Ghana is honoured to lead this year, stands ready to engage in constructive negotiations with the developed countries on the basis, we hope, of the shared objective of making the international economic order just and equitable so that all can realize their legitimate aspirations for better standards of living.

The Accra Declaration of the Non-Aligned Movement is not alone in recognizing the primacy of development to international peace and security. In its The World Development Report 1991, the World Bank vividly captures the mood of the times when it opens its 290-page report with the sentence "Development is the most important challenge facing the human race". The new

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encyclical "Centesimus Annus" of Pope John Paul II echoes this same opinion when it states

"... the new name for peace is development. Just as there is a collective responsibility for avoiding war, so too there is a collective responsibility for promoting development."

In the discharge of that collective responsibility, let us not see some of us as irritating and nagging intruders, parasites or lazy people seeking only to consume what others have produced. Developing countries only ask for the right to development within a just international economic order. That is also most vital for a peaceful world.

Mr. GIRAY (Turkey): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Ambassador Samir Shihabi on his election to the high office of President of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. His attributes as a distinguished diplomat are well known to us in Turkey, where he represented Saudi Arabia with great distinction for many years. His country has made a great contribution to peace and stability in our part of the world, and I am confident that under his wise guidance the General Assembly will do likewise on a global scale.

I should also like to pay a tribute to Mr. Guide de Marco, the President of the forty-fifth session, for his outstanding performance in guiding the work of the General Assembly during an eventful year.

This session of the General Assembly represents a historic step in further consolidating the universality of the United Nations, through the admission to membership of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. My delegation takes joyful pride in welcoming them to the world family, and we believe that this community will be enriched

(Mr. Giray, Turkey)

and strengthened by their contribution to the realization of the ideals of the United Nations.

Since the autumn of 1990, when the last General Assembly session started its deliberations, change in Europe has continued at the rapid pace set during the momentous period highlighted by the 1989 revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe and the developments leading to the peaceful unification of Germany. All over the eastern half of the Continent, advances towards democracy and economic reform, although uneven, have been encouraging. The process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) broke new ground when, in November 1990, participating States met and signed the Charter of Paris for a new Europe, which marking the end of the cold war and in which they commit themselves to a new European architecture. The successful international action under United Nations auspices to repel aggression and restore the sovereignty of Kuwait has shown that the world Organization has evolved to the point of assuming its functions as the prime vehicle for resolving disputes and reinforcing global peace and stability.

(Mr. Giray, Turkey)

In carrying out these functions, our Organization has had the good fortune to have as its Secretary-General Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, an eminent statesman of great integrity and total commitment to the ideals of the United Nations. After many years of distinguished service as the highest international civil servant, he can look back to his 10 years of performance with justified pride and satisfaction. In Turkey, we shall always remember him for his dedication to the principles of the Charter and for his impartiality.

With the ending of the cold war in Europe and the conclusion of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and START treaties, the world has entered a promising era of transition. These are times of great opportunities. The threat of nuclear destruction now weighs less heavily upon humankind. The numerous local conflicts that were so difficult to settle because of cold war rivalries are gradually becoming susceptible to solutions in which the United Nations will play an increasingly key role.

An enhanced United Nations living up to our expectations in this new era of change calls for a more streamlined and more effective Organization. To achieve this, we must pursue our efforts aimed at restructuring the United Nations in line with the demands of operational efficiency. Such restructuring should of course include the reform of the General Assembly. In this respect, I would like to note the singular contribution of Mr. de Marco during his presidency of the General Assembly. I am confident that the reform of the General Assembly and its main committees will continue under your presidency and that this universal forum will emerge as a more faithful mirror of the community of nations and its collective aspirations.

(Mr. Giray, Turkey)

The era of transition through which our world is passing, although promising, is not free of risks and uncertainties that pose challenges which have to be successfully addressed if our vision for a better international order is to be attained. The Gulf crisis has provided clear evidence of the new resolve on the part of the world community that aggression and violation of international law shall not be tolerated. This new resolve should be maintained and buttressed. Arms control and disarmament is a major field where the current momentum should be sustained and accelerated.

As the spirit of cooperation strikes deeper and firmer roots, the effectiveness of the United Nations will also increase. The settlement of the existing conflicts through dialogue and negotiations, rather than by resorting to force, will be facilitated. Thus we can expect an acceleration of the global process of arms control and reduction, to which we should all make our full contribution.

By this, I mean the extension into the conventional sphere of the arms control and reduction processes, particularly in those regional and intercommunal conflict areas where the conventional arms race is an important factor in building up tensions and deepening mutual suspicions.

Another area where we expect to see the United Nations more active is the protection of the environment. The consciousness is growing all around that the quality of life of future generations and, perhaps, their very survival is dependent on our doing the right things now to protect and preserve our common environment. Turkey is preparing for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in this spirit, and, 20 years after Stockholm, we expect this Conference to be a new milestone in the growing concern of the United Nations for the environment.

(Mr. Giray, Turkey)

To promote world-wide respect for human rights and the fundamental freedoms of the individual is a priority task deserving greater United Nations interest in a changing international environment. There exists a direct relationship between the degree of protection of human rights and the degree of democratization in societies. Since democracies are less prone to aggressive adventurism, world peace and international stability can rest on stronger foundations only if due observance of human rights on a non-discriminatory basis is ensured on a universal scale.

The many risks and uncertainties that cast their shadow on the promises of the current era of transition are often intertwined with various aspects of the question of human rights. Indeed, ethnic rivalries, chauvinistic tendencies, xenophobic treatment of migrant communities, racist practices, religious fanaticism and intolerance can be overcome only through a strict observance of human rights. We must all accept that respect for human rights is an area of legitimate concern for the United Nations and it is in this universal forum that we must strive to establish standards which are applicable everywhere.

I am proud to say that since the establishment of our republic almost 70 years ago, Turkey has made steady progress in ensuring that its citizens enjoy their human rights to the fullest extent. Turkey has become a party to all the European instruments designed to protect human rights. Turkish legislation is being constantly reviewed and amended to prevent abuses from taking place.

The spread of drug addiction and illicit trafficking in narcotics continues to be a global menace affecting all countries. Often linked to arms smuggling and to international terrorism, this scourge has acquired alarming

(Mr. Giray, Turkey)

dimensions. Turkey believes that the response to this menace should be concerted, forceful and global. We are fully committed to making our contribution to its eradication. We welcome the creation of the United Nations international drug control programme. We are confident that this new structure will play a fundamental role in the international campaign against drugs and in the enhancement of regional and international cooperation.

The fate of the peoples of the Balkans and of the Middle East, including the Gulf area, are of particular interest to Turkey. In this context, we attribute importance to the future of Yugoslavia, since peace and stability in the Balkan region depend in large measure on what happens in that country.

We are profoundly concerned with the ongoing violence among the peoples of the Yugoslav federation. We hope for an early solution to the conflict through dialogue and in accordance with the will of all the Yugoslav peoples, who should be the only ones to determine the future of their country.

A speedy settlement of the Yugoslav crisis is crucial to the maintenance of stability not only in the Balkans, but also in the rest of Europe. Hence, we support the peace initiatives of the CSCE countries and sincerely hope that these may yield positive results. We welcome the resolution on Yugoslavia adopted by the Security Council yesterday.

(Mr. Giray, Turkey)

In the Middle East, two separate issues are of fundamental importance: finding a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine and to the Arab-Israeli dispute, while also maintaining and consolidating peace and security in the Gulf area.

On many occasions, we have had the opportunity to express our firm stand on the question of Palestine, which lies at the heart of the Middle East dispute. Turkey is convinced that a solution to this problem has to be based on negotiations among all the parties conducted on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

We are happy to see that the efforts of the United States, coupled with the constructive and realistic stand of the Arab countries and of the Soviet Union, have brought about the conditions for holding a regional conference. We earnestly hope that all parties in the peace process will make an effort to prevent this opportunity from slipping away.

Before explaining our views regarding the post-war situation in the Gulf zone and on the need for substantially increasing multilateral economic cooperation as part of future confidence building in the whole of the Middle East, I wish to underline how pleased we are to witness the gradual normalization of the situation in Lebanon and the return of peace to that ravaged country. We believe that national reconciliation in Lebanon requires sustained peace and the full implementation of the Taif Agreement. That peace can only be built on the preservation of Lebanon's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Hence, we consider the efforts of the National Reconciliation Government to extend its sovereignty over the entire country to be a step in the right direction.

(Mr. Giray, Turkey)

The post-war politico-military landscape in the Gulf zone features a brightening horizon partially clouded by incertitude. Kuwait has been liberated and we welcome the restoration of its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as of its legitimate Government. The efforts of the Kuwaiti Government and people to overcome the devastating effects of invasion and occupation are commendable. We are confident that these endeavours, which have already started to yield tangible results, will soon lead to the recovery of Kuwait's pre-war prosperity.

The post-war policies of the Iraqi leadership have been a source of major concern for us. These policies have led to a refugee crisis of colossal proportions in the aftermath of the cease-fire. Iraqi policies have also been ambivalent about implementing pertinent Security Council resolutions. Those who have suffered most from these policies are the Iraqi people themselves, who are facing serious shortages and great hardship as winter approaches. Consequently, Iraq's full compliance with Security Council resolution 687 (1991) and subsequent resolutions relevant to various aspects of the post-war settlement is not only the rightful expectation of the international community, but also a prerequisite for the resumption by that country of its place in the family of nations. It is our sincere hope that the Iraqi leadership will act accordingly and that the sufferings of the Iraqi people will thus be brought to an end.

Turkey believes that genuine multilateral economic cooperation on a region-wide scale could contribute to strengthening peace and stability in the Middle East by bringing about an increased communality of interests. With each country having a stake in the preservation of regional peace, economic interdependence could pave the way for introducing more advanced

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confidence-building measures, as proposed by Turkey, within the framework of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which held its twentieth ministerial session in Istanbul last August. This first meeting of Islamic Foreign Ministers since the end of the Gulf war resolved to continue deploying efforts in this direction as a means of guaranteeing and contributing to the supremacy of international law, justice and legitimacy in the longer run. It is a source of particular satisfaction to us that the Istanbul ministerial meeting of the OIC thus underscored its dedication to a just and durable peace through dialogue, cooperation and respect for international legitimacy.

The spirit of the new times, manifesting itself in moves toward reconciliation and peaceful change, is beginning to prevail over the entire African continent from the Western Sahara to southern Africa.

Regarding the situation in Western Sahara, we fully support the Secretary-General in his mission of good offices, jointly pursued with the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, in search of an early settlement of the question. In line with this policy, Turkey is glad to make available military observers to take part in the monitoring of the cease-fire that came into force on 6 September 1991. We hope that the parties involved in the dispute will continue to cooperate with the Secretary-General in the implementation of the plan for a referendum in that territory.

After Namibia gained its independence, the process of political change set in motion in South Africa constitutes a source of happiness for my country. Turkey has always adopted a position firmly in favour of the complete elimination of apartheid. We welcome the repeal of the Land Acts, the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act - the pillars of a detestable system - as historical steps in this direction. Turkey would like

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to see a speeding up of the process of negotiation on the new constitution leading to the establishment of a democratic and non-racial South Africa, which will give it the opportunity of regaining its rightful place in the community of nations.

The continuation of the domestic strife which has brought untold suffering to the Afghan people looms prominently among the problems disturbing peace in Asia and is a source of serious preoccupation for Turkey.

We welcome the Baker-Pankin accord announced on 13 September which provides for an end to the delivery of military supplies to the parties as of next January. We hope that this measure will facilitate the quest for a political solution along the lines of the Secretary-General's latest peace initiative launched on 21 May 1991. Such a solution calls for the setting up of a Government representing all segments of Afghan society which, in turn, requires an inter-Afghan dialogue. Hence, emphasis at this stage should be put on the promotion of a sustained dialogue between the Afghan parties that must be conducted alongside the ongoing consultations among the countries concerned.

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As a friend of the Afghan people, Turkey is prepared to contribute further to the search for a political settlement in Afghanistan.

The situation in Jammu and Kashmir also continues to be a source of concern for us. It is our sincere hope that the mutual resolve manifesting itself in the ongoing dialogue between Pakistan and India will also find its positive reflection in Kashmir and that a peaceful settlement of the dispute will be found in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and the provisions of the Simla Agreement.

Throughout the past year the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Turkey have worked intensively for a fair solution in Cyprus based on the political equality of the two sides in the island. We are seeking a comprehensive and lasting solution to a very complicated and delicate problem between two national communities with identities of their own. The reality in Cyprus for the past 28 years has been the lack of a joint political authority competent to represent and speak for both peoples of the island. This is the core of the problem. Both the partnership State and its joint Government that existed in 1960 came to a violent end within three years. In the 28 years that have followed since then, there has been neither a joint State nor a joint Government. A solution in Cyprus will enable the two parties that have been governing themselves separately to come together to share power under new circumstances and within a new partnership. This solution should fully take into account the legitimate rights and interests of both sides and should in no way be the source or future conflicts in the island and beyond.

During the present process under the Secretary-General's mission of good offices, extensive ground has been covered towards developing a draft overall framework agreement; but serious differences have remained between the two

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sides on vital issues. A settlement depends on an agreement on these issues between the two parties in the island.

Four months ago Turkey proposed a quadripartite meeting on Cyprus to be attended by the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders as equal parties and by Turkey and Greece at a high political level. This proposal, intended to give a strong impetus to the mission of the Secretary-General, was rejected at the time by Greece and the Greek Cypriot side. Despite this rejection, the idea of a high-level meeting on Cyprus has continued to enjoy wide support. The general understanding that has emerged is that such a meeting can take place only after the two sides in the island have reached full agreement on all aspects of the problem.

We hope this point can be reached in the near future. We hold the view that the lack of direct contacts between the parties in Cyprus and the deep mistrust between the two communities continue profoundly to complicate the process. We are convinced that, should the two leaders in Cyprus resume direct contacts, the likelihood of narrowing existing differences would be greatly enhanced. We believe this to be both necessary and natural between two parties which will be called on to cooperate and share power under a settlement.

At the same time, there is an urgent need for the parties to move towards establishing a new and constructive relationship based on mutual respect. Recently the Turkish Cypriot parliament unanimously adopted a resolution which calls for the implementation without delay of confidence-building and goodwill measures in order to create a constructive atmosphere between the two sides and to establish a peaceful basis for their relationship.

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As a result of these efforts by the Turkish side to lead the way to a freely negotiated and mutually acceptable settlement, the problem now stands on a new plane. This new stage calls for an even-handed approach by the international community in support of an agreement based on the consent of two equal parties: the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots. What is required at the moment is not recriminations and the pursuit of unrelenting confrontation but a new mentality which will bring about positive change. We know the Turkish Cypriot side is ready to pursue this constructive path.

Let me now turn to international economic issues. The profound political changes we have witnessed in recent years are also having their effect on the economic front. The greater integration of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and of the Soviet Union in the global economy should bring opportunities to the developing countries. The high-level debate held during the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council has been helpful in providing a better understanding of these developments. At present we are witnessing a great convergence of economic policies, unlike anything seen in the past. Even though there is a greater tendency towards global integration, the difficult problems of the past decade remain essentially unchanged. The developing countries still suffer from poverty, unfavourable terms of trade, excessive foreign debt and serious environmental problems. Despite these difficulties and even though economic growth in many developing countries continues to be unsatisfactory, there are reasons to be hopeful.

The prospects for growth in the developing countries would appear to be based primarily on three factors: the policies that they will adopt themselves, the economic performance of the industrialized countries and the

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ability of the international economic system to back up the implementation of effective policies by the developing countries.

The progress achieved on the debt issue, compared to the overall volume of foreign debt, remains modest. Debt reduction agreements for certain countries have given rise to some anticipation. The case-by-case approach should encompass all debtor nations, with special emphasis on the least developed countries.

A major vehicle for the developing countries to break the burden of foreign debt and pursue their development is trade. Trade provides a very important opportunity for developing countries to promote economic growth and to narrow the gap between themselves and the industrialized countries. However, the persistence of trade protectionism diminishes the possibilities offered by expanded trade. Many important decisions depend on the success of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations. In this respect, we welcome the declaration by the Group of Seven in regard to concluding these negotiations successfully before the end of 1992.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate our hope that this forty-sixth session of the General Assembly will be fruitful and will contribute to the security and well-being of all nations. My delegation pledges to contribute fully to the attainment of our common objective.

Mr. de MARCO (Malta): I wish to extend to Ambassador Shihabi my congratulations on his election to the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. His election is a tribute not only to him personally for his long-standing and dedicated contribution to this Organization, but also to the country he represents, Saudi Arabia, with which Malta has had long ties of friendship and diplomatic relations. I wish him all success in his task and assure him of the support of the delegation of Malta for his endeavours to bring the work of the General Assembly to a successful conclusion. During the past 12 months I have come to know him personally. His friendship and advice were an asset to me in my work as President of the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

I also wish to congratulate the new Member States that have joined the community of nations. Malta welcomes the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to membership of the United Nations. Their joining the Organization as sovereign, independent countries is the vindication of the judgement of history on an aggression pact aimed at the annihilation of three independent Republics, members of the League of Nations. Their presence here is a lesson that the United Nations can never countenance a situation where aggression prevails, and where peoples and nations are bartered by those who have the brazen power to do so.

The fact that, having this time last year heard in this Assembly the dignified appeal of His Highness the Emir of Kuwait for the liberation of his country, we have heard him this morning as head of a liberated sovereign State Member of the United Nations is evidence of this resolve.

We welcome the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea. I avail myself of this opportunity to thank the respective Governments

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of these two new Members for receiving me in their capitals as President of the General Assembly prior to the filing of their applications to join the Organization. I am confident that the presence of their two delegations in the United Nations will help to foster dialogue and understanding that will, in the maturity of time, lead to the unification of Korea.

My country welcomes the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, which, through the Trusteeship Council, have reached sovereignty and independence. Their presence here will certainly contribute to the Pacific dimension of our Organization.

In sponsoring the applications of all seven countries, Malta wanted to register its support for the universality of the United Nations.

Malta's foreign policy is to project to other nations its true identity by strengthening confidence in and respect for the political norms of a pluralistic society and of a democratic environment where mutual respect and equal rights for all are encouraged and upheld. My country believes that in the further consolidation of these democratic values nations will identify themselves with freedom and social justice.

We believe that the human dimension, involving as it does the observance of human rights, the recognition of pluralism, and the promotion of social progress and better standards of life in larger freedoms, is basic for an interdependent world where peace is indivisible.

During the past 20 months we have contributed to the termination of a bipolar world. We at the United Nations have lived this bipolarism and were almost marginalized as a result. To those who think that a unipolar world is the outcome of the end of bipolarism, may I suggest that there is no indication that this state of affairs is emerging. The statement made to this

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Assembly by President Bush, assuring the world that the United States has no intention of striving for a pax Americana but is seeking a pax universalis building on shared responsibility and aspirations, reflects the reality of a situation that depends on us all in its observance. A multipolar approach is evolving in an international scenario where certain countries, or groups of countries, continue affirming themselves. The United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the European Community, the People's Republic of China and Japan are assuming new political and economic responsibilities. However, we reiterate that a multipolar approach in the new international world order cannot be based on this global pentagonale but must involve the small and medium-sized countries, which can contribute towards the maintenance of peace and security. For the small and medium-sized countries are the majority of States in the United Nations, and they are not a silent majority. They are indeed the countries where many of the world's problems, both political and economic, exist.

In this new multipolar international world order that is evolving, the concept of the human dimension must be the golden thread that links it up.

The human-dimension concept involves aspects that are intrinsically correlated. The first covers the fundamental human rights and freedoms, which have been defined in international conventions. We believe in these human rights, not in the abstract but in their concrete reality, involving, as they should, not only rights of a juridical nature - important and invaluable in themselves - but also social rights: the right to live, the right to shelter, the right to work. The juridical and the social rights are interdependent.

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The second aspect covers the principle of the rule of law, the principle that protects the individual from the arbitrary exercise of power and from discrimination.

The third covers the basic concept of pluralistic democracy, where freedom of assembly and freedom of association can manifest themselves in free and regular elections. Unfortunately, in some countries the principle of "one man, one vote" has been amended to "one man, one vote, once".

The demise of an ideology based on the dictatorship of any particular sector of society has shown that in the new international world order which is evolving the concept of the human dimension has no frontier. It is now important for the United Nations to create the necessary machinery to ensure that this concept receives mandatory enforcement. May I refer in this context to the statement made by the Foreign Minister of the USSR, Boris Pankin, that

> "specific human rights issues and matters of compliance with international commitments in this area cannot any longer be dismissed under the artificial pretext of interference in internal affairs". (A/46/PV.6, p. 77)

The new international world order is increasing the need for regional arrangements in the maintenance of peace and security. In my Government's view, Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, dealing with regional arrangements, should be examined with a view to encouraging through such regional arrangements the development of the pacific settlement of disputes on the initiative of States themselves or by reference from the Security Council.

Within this concept of regional arrangements, Malta forms part of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Ever since the enactment of the Helsinki Final Act, and also as a result of Malta's

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insistence at the Helsinki Conference, the linkage between security in Europe and security in the Mediterranean has been recognized. The Mediterranean, however, is far from being a lake of peace. The economic and social challenges facing North African countries, the situation in the Middle East and the Cyprus question are prejudicing the prospects for peace and security in the region. We believe and maintain that the international conference on peace in the Middle East, with the involvement of the United Nations, is still the best formula to approach the problem comprehensively. However, we consider c nferences, all conferences, not to be an end in themselves but a means to an end. The end in this case is the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Within those parameters we encourage all initiatives intended to bring together the parties involved. We therefore favour and encourage the initiative which United States Secretary of State Baker is undertaking, an initiative to which the Foreign Minister of the USSR, Boris Pankin, is also contributing. In our view, however, the prospects for peace in the region can start only with the cessation by Israel of its settlements in the occupied territories. These settlements are, and will be, creating further difficulties and indeed great human problems which could prejudice the prospects for a lasting and just solution.

The situation in Yugoslavia, a country which faces the Adriatic Sea, is itself a matter of grave concern for all, not only for us in the Mediterranean; the situation in that country is creating issues and problems which the Organization may eventually have to face. On the one hand there is the concept of the sovereignty of a State vis-à-vis the United Nations, on the other the human dimension involved as a result of the war activities taking

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place. There is a distinction between national minorities and national entities. On the issue of national minorities, many are the international bodies which have set out the parameters of protection within the State to which these belong. But national entities - peoples which have their own national identity and group themselves, sometimes voluntarily and sometimes as a result of historical circumstances, and who react to situations preferring to disengage themselves from larger entities - require a different approach.

We are looking at this subject in full awareness of the complexities resulting therefrom, but also with the realism that the situation deserves. The situation in Yugoslavia may herald similar situations in other countries in Europe and in Africa, where, through the course of wars, conquests and colonialism, peoples have been moved, bartered and battered. Great sensitivity to the past and realism today are fundamental in reaching solutions which are to be based on the unacceptability of the use of force and the need to take account of all legitimate concerns and aspirations.

The position of my Government on the situation in Yugoslavia is that we are participating fully in the efforts of the CSCE to restore order and stability in the country for the benefit of the people and to defuse a situation which could become a threat to security and stability in the region. Any attempt in such circumstances to impose solutions through the use of armed force may carry serious consequences for the future.

We hope that all political and military leaders in Yugoslavia and in its constituent republics will reassert the CSCE principles as a means to achieve a negotiated peace worthy of a new Europe and the new international order we are seeking to create. We believe that the European Community is making a

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positive contribution and, through the services of Lord Carrington, is trying to bring the parties to a peaceful settlement. The United Nations may be called upon to shoulder responsibilities envisaged in the Charter, with particular reference to Chapter VIII, dealing with regional arrangements.

Disarmament continues to be a priority objective for the international community. Despite the end of the cold war, annual military expenditure world-wide exceeds $900 billion. To add to the tragedy of the third world, developing countries, to procure foreign weapons, spend as a whole an equivalent of 23 per cent over and above the amount they receive in economic development aid.

Malta is in favour of the reduction of nuclear weapons with a view to their ultimate elimination, in favour of a balanced reduction of conventional weapons, and in favour of the complete prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical and biological weapons. My Government is in favour of urgent action being taken to apply confidence- and security-building measures on the high seas.

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As an island and Mediterranean State, Malta advocates that naval disarmament should feature prominently in international negotiations. The process which is unfolding in Europe in nuclear disarmament must be extended to cover sea-based as well as airborne sites. As much as we need open skies we need open seas.

The CSCE process has entered a new and important phase. A concept of security and cooperation is emerging from Vancouver to Vladivostok. A common vocabulary is being used. The Charter of Paris is a milestone in both the political and the social fields.

Malta's role in the new Europe has been appropriately addressed by its application to join the European Community. We believe that the European Community, to live up to its responsibility as the motor force leading to European unity, has to be outward looking and ready for enlargement. We are amongst those who believe that a process of in-depth structuring does not hinder its enlargement.

The intergovernmental conferences leading to monetary union and political cooperation, coupled with the acquis communitaire process, should not constitute a barrier between the Twelve and the rest in Europe that have the qualifications and the political will to join.

It is, in our view, relevant to give due weight to the market aspect of the Community, but may we suggest that Hallstein's concept of the European Community - not being "in business, we are in politics" - should take precedence in the proper evaluation of the Community's role in Europe and the world.

Malta's role in Europe is linked to its role in the Mediterranean. Indeed, we believe that Malta's participation in the Community will further strengthen the cooperation between the Community and the southern countries of

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the Mediterranean. Within this concept also we advocate a conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean, and continue to give our support to the Western Mediterranean Forum.

In this general debate speakers have touched on problems of the developing world. The United Nations has to be the conscience of the world in realizing that there exists a poverty curtain where billions of men and women are condemned at birth to lead a life of misery and hunger. It is the responsibility of our Organization to create the necessary structures to ensure that this indictment against today's society, harbouring mountains of butter in one part while part of humanity is dying from hunger and want in other areas of the world, be removed.

We are witnessing 15 million refugees and more, victims of strife and drought. We have hunger-refugees for whom our conventions do not apply.

As President of the General Assembly I wrote to this effect to the Secretary-General, not only referring to the presence of the Albanian boat people, but also suggesting that initiatives be taken in the United Nations so that the concept of "refugees" be extended to cover "hunger-refugees", and that measures be considered to encourage further economic assistance, through both bilateral and multilateral sources in these unfortunate circumstances. On this matter I have received positive indications from both the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Refugees.

We believe that this Organization cannot relegate its role to that of a mere spectator in the field of economic development. Far from relegating itself, it has to make economic development the spearhead of its activities for a more just, secure and equitable global society.

The issue of the environment is of particular interest to my Government, which has already taken an initiative on the adverse consequences of climate

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change. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Brazil in June 1992, will consider the adoption of a framework convention on climate change, a fitting conclusion to three years of intensive negotiations on an initiative taken by the Government of Malta at the forty-third session of the General Assembly.

Issues affecting the common heritage of mankind, in particular the seabed, issues affecting the common concern of mankind, in particular global warming and sea-level rise, problems affecting the rights of future generations - all are subjects which require our constant attention. For they concern matters that are kept by us in trust for future generations.

Within this context we have already proposed to the Assembly that the Trusteeship Council, in addition to its functions under the Charter, should not only be entrusted with Territories and men but should also be the Trusteeship Council of the world in matters affecting the common heritage and common concerns of an everlasting humanity.

For this Organization to be able to play its role to defend the peace, to live the freedoms and to promote social progress and better standards of life, it has to evolve into a second-generation United Nations. For this purpose there has to be a constitutional linkage between its principal organs - the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat. As the Secretary-General pointed out in his report,

> "This ... is not merely an issue of the internal working of the Organization; it bears on the guardianship of peace exercised by the United Nations." (A/46/1, p. 20)

We think that the principle of frugality must be at the basis of our Organization. To meet the new challenges which the international situation

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has opened up for the United Nations we need more resources and a stronger financial commitment. We have expressed the importance of the principle of frugality, not because less will be spent, but in order to ensure that the greater financial involvement will give optimal results.

For this second-generation United Nations to have the moral strength and to be at the service of the peoples of the world we think that the following considerations are important:

one, a revitalization of the United Nations principal organs, with particular reference to the General Assembly and its links with the Security Council and the Secretariat;

two, the creation of conflict-warning systems;

three, enhancing the peace-keeping forces of the United Nations in order to reinforce peace where such a presence is useful and required;

four, a strong lead by the United Nations in the disarmament process, particularly in regulating the transfer and sale of arms;

five, the mobilization of all human resources to fight against poverty in the world as well as to provide solutions for the refugee tragedy;

six, a modern and adequate approach to the problems afflicting contemporary societies, in particular the fight against drugs, AIDS and terrorism;

seven, the creation of an emergency centre against natural and man-made disasters;

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eight, the additional role of the Trusteeship Council as a body designed to safeguard the environment, the common heritage of mankind and common concerns for future generations;

nine, the setting up of an efficient system of international security giving Articles 43 and 45 of the Charter the relevance conceived by the founders of the United Nations;

ten, re-evaluating and re-assessing the purposes and aims of regional arrangements considered under Chapter VIII of the Charter;

eleven, the development of and respect for international law, not only in its classic spheres but also in economic and environmental development;

twelve, the accentuation of the role of the individual in the United Nations, giving the human dimension its rightful prominence in promoting social progress and better standards of life in larger freedoms.

We have tried in this statement to give the views and reactions of a country with limited dimensions, but with geostrategic relevance in the Mediterranean, to the problems of today and to the concept of the United Nations. Malta has tried to give its contribution with other nations towards the principles of the Charter within a context of the new international situation.

For it is to the United Nations that peoples throughout the world are entrusting their future. The United Nations has generated a sense of service and dedication to the cause of man living the concept of peace in freedom.

May I in this context express to the Secretary-General the sincere thanks of my country for his dedication to the cause of peace. Mr. Perez de Cuellar has given a decade of his life to this Organization as Secretary-General. May I suggest that for the Secretary-General these past 12 months have perhaps

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been the most difficult in that the occupation of Kuwait created in him a conflict natural in a man of peace gifted with great sensitivity for mankind. Having been close to the Secretary-General during these past 12 months, I want to express my deep admiration for his services in the cause of peace.

We are all facing the unknown, but it is an unknown for which we possess a compass. Although the present and latent difficulties and problems are many, this forty-sixth year of the United Nations can herald a greater commitment to the cause of peace and justice.

We have a unique opportunity in the present international situation to create a new international order. We cannot miss this opportunity. In the words of Henri Bergson, "Time is a path you do not pass over twice." That is today's challenge for building tomorrow's future.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.